



ABERCORN SCHOOL OFF SITE VISIT POLICY

This policy also applies to the EYFS

Updated	Review Date	Version
October 2021	September 2022	2021.01

Signed: Mr John Clarke (Chairman of the Board)

The Drugs and Alcohol Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- *Anti-Bullying policy*
- *Pastoral Care and Pupil Support policy*
- *Wellbeing policy*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection policy*
- *SMSC policy*

Abercorn Policy on Off-Site Visits

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The Directors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

This policy is written with regard to the DfE guidance - *Health and safety of pupils on educational visits*.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:
- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
 - provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
 - Promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and progress to residential experiences towards the end of Key Stage 2.

3 Curriculum links

- 3.1 For each subject in the curriculum, there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists).
- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
 - Science – use of the school grounds, visits to gardens and zoos;

- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
- Art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities;
- Music – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local schools' orchestra, concerts for parents to hear; fundraising concerts.
- design and technology – visits to local factories or design centres;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools, etc.;
- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local religious figures.
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station, an old people's residential home, financial institutions, visits by local police officers and health workers.
- Languages- visit to local institutes, use of local facilities, trips abroad when permitted.

4 Residential activities

- 4.1 Children in Years 3, 4 and 5 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit in the UK and those in Years 6, 7, and 8 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit abroad although this is being assessed in the current Covid climate. If travel is deemed too risky, we would look at UK venues for these Year groups. We make a charge for travel, board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities.
- 4.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of our curriculum. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

5 How visits may be authorised:

- 5.1 The Deputy Head for each site is the Trip and Off-site Visit Coordinator for that site. A trip leader is responsible for running the activity in collaboration with the Deputy. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.
- 5.2 The party leader will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

S/he will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed including COVID 19 Measures put in place at the visited site and to get to the site itself.
- support the Senior Leadership Team in their decisions on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- The relevant Deputy will keep records of visits, and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the risks (e.g. road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (e.g. a swimming facility).

- 5.3 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval from a member of the management team before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the party leader.
- 5.4 Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Headmaster must give approval before the activity takes place.
- 5.5 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us to adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

6 Risk assessment

The trip leader must check that external activity providers have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance. The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) awards the LOtC Quality Badge to organisations which meet nationally recognised standards. Where the organisation does not hold the badge, the school must check they are an appropriate organisation to use. This will include checking:

- their insurance;
- they meet legal requirements;
- their health and safety and emergency policies;
- their risk assessments and control measures;
- their use of vehicles;
- staff competence;
- safeguarding;
- accommodation;
- any sub-contracting arrangements they have;
- that they have a license where needed.

When planning an activity involving caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports (other than rowing), the trip leader must currently check that the provider holds a license as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 (for England, Scotland and Wales).

There should be an emergency plan and communications plan, known to the trip leaders. The website of the Outdoor Educator's Advisors' Panel is a source of advice. Visits should be evaluated after completion and records kept of incidents, accidents and near misses.

- 6.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit including the risks around the spread of COVID 19, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What assessments are available through the site/facility manager/organisation?

- What measures have been put in place in line with Government Guidance to limit the spread of COVID 19?
- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

6.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. S/he should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. S/he will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve.

6.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself and approved by the Bursar and SLT.

6.4 An off-site visit should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 8;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 4 pupils in Reception;
- 1 adult to 3 pupils in Pre-Reception.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults and for Pre-Reception classes a minimum of three adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

6.5 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts;
- proper vetting of the driver by the police;

- proper insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- breakdown procedures.

6.6 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the School Office and all staff supervising the trip.

7 Transport

7.1 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

7.2 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks (see 5.2).

8 Communication with parents

8.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission annually in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

8.2 The timetable for any payment should allow for the group leader in consultation with the Bursar and SLT to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

9 Further health and safety considerations

9.1 All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

9.2 Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

9.3 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

9.4 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the Head Master the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

9.5 Parents complete a form in the “Welcome Pack” which gives the school permission for emergency treatment should either the parents or the emergency contact person be unobtainable.

10 **Visit Plan**

10.1 The Visit Plan for intended educational visits may include the following:

- risk assessment
- report on preliminary visit;
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- medical questionnaire returns;
- first-aid boxes.

11 **Monitoring and review**

A trips and visit evaluation form should be done once the trip completed.